

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 IO-10 AID-05 EUR-12 EB-07 OES-03

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PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 CU-02 AGR-05 /102 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2537

INFO AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ABU DHABI 0261

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TC US

SUBJ: THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES AT THE THREE-YEAR MARK: III. US-UAE
RELATIONS

1. SUMMARY: CONDITION OF US-UAE RELATIONS IS BASICALLY GOOD.
UAEG WANTS ACCESS TO OUR SOCIETY AND TECHNOLOGY AND VALUES OUR
SUPPORT FOR VIABILITY OF FEDERATION. BUT UAE IS ALSO HIGHLY SENSI-
TIZED TO UPS AND DOWNS OF ARAB-ISRAEL SITUATION, SO THAT MUCH

DEPENDS ON OUTCOME OF OUR EFFORTS IN THAT SPHERE. END SUMMARY.

2. EMERGING FROM 150 YEARS OF PROTECTED STATUS AND DEPENDENCE ON
GREAT BRITIAN, UAE HAS MOVED RAPIDLY TO DIVERSIFY ITS RELATIONS WITH
OUTSIDE WORLD. WHILE ITS STATED POLICY IS TO BE FRIENDS WITH
EVERYONE, UAEG IN FACT HAS BEEN SELECTIVE IN ITS CHOICE OF
FOREIGN COUNTRIES THAT IT WISHES TO SEE PLAY MAJOR ROLE IN DEVELOP-
MENT OF THE NATION. THE US IS UNQUESTIONABLY ONE OF THIS GROUP.

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UAE'S LEADERS ARE AWARE OF OUR TECHNOLOGICAL STRENGTH, SHARE MANY OF

OUR VALUES, AND PERHAPS AS IMPORTANT, ARE CONSCIOUS OF FACT THAT IT IS US MORE THAN ANY OTHER STATE THAT HAS INHERITED MANTLE FORMERLY WORN BY BRITAIN AS OVERSEER OF A WORLD ORDER IN WHICH SMALL NATIONS SUCH AS UAE CAN LIVE AND PROSPER IN RELATIVE SECURITY. ALL OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS, AS WELL AS OTHERS SUCH AS FACT THAT AMERICANS ARE PERSONALLY POPULAR HERE, HAVE LED UAE INSTINCTIVELY TO WANT TO ESTABLISH CLOSE RELATIONS WITH THE US. IN UAE AS IN OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES IT IS TESTAMENT TO STRENGTH OF THESE FACTORS THAT THEY HAVE NOT BEEN OBLITERATED BY US SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL.

2. US HAS, THEREFORE, NUMBER OF THINGS GOING FOR IT HERE, BUT THERE ARE OF COURSE FORCES WORKING IN OTHER DIRECTION. US POLICY ON ARAB-ISRAEL PROBLEM IS FAR AND AWAY MOST IMPORTANT OF THESE. UAE'S OWN PERCEPTION OF HOW THIS NATION SHOULD RELATE TO REST OF ARAB WORLD SEEMS TO PLACE IT SOMEWHERE BETWEEN ITS NEIGHBOR OMAN, WHERE ATMOSPHERE IS LARGELY ONE OF SELF-ABSORPTION, AND KUWAIT, WHICH IS HIGHLY SENSITIZED TO POLITICAL CURRENTS IN REST OF ARAB WORLD. WHILE ARAB-ISRAEL PROBLEM IS PERHAPS LESS OF FACTOR HERE THAN IN KUWAIT, WE WOULD JUDGE IT TO BE MORE SO THAN IN OTHER SMALL GULF SHAIKHDOMS. UAE CONSEQUENTLY DOES NOT FEEL IT HAS MUCH FLEXIBILITY TO DISTANCE ITSELF FROM "ARAB CENSUS" AND HAS AS YET TO DEVELOP LEVEL OF SOPHISTICATION KUWAITIS HAVE TO SAY ONE THING AND BE DOING QUITE ANOTHER.

3. US-UAE RELATIONS THEREFORE REMAIN MUCH EXPOSED TO UPS AND DOWNS OF ARAB-ISRAEL PROBLEM. WHEN CONGRESS VOTED \$2.2 BILLION FOR ISRAEL DURING OCTOBER WAR ABU DHABI WAS FIRST ARAB STATE TO ANNOUNCE OIL EMBARGO ON THE US. THIS WAS SHAIKH ZAYID'S PERSONAL DECISION AND AGAINST THE ADVICE OF HIS CLOSE ADVISORS WHO SAW NO REASON FOR SUCH PRECIPITATE ACTION. IN YEAR THAT HAS PASSED SINCE THEN WE BELIEVE SHAIKH ZAYID HAS DEVELOPED GREATER APPRECIATION OF COMPLEXITY AND MAGNITUDE OF ARAB-ISRAEL PROBLEM AND IS MORE APPRECIATIVE OF US ROLE IN TRYING TO RESOLVE IT IN PEACEFUL FASHION. HE HAS GENUINE ADMIRATION FOR SECRETARY'S ACHIEVEMENT IN NEGOTIATING FIRST STEP AGREEMENTS WITH EGYPT AND SYRIA. EGYPTIANS AND JORDANIANS HAVE BEEN HELPFUL IN IMPRESSING UPON ZAYID REALISTIC ATTITUDES ABOUT DIFFICULTIES OF MAKING FURTHER PROGRESS. ON OTHER HAND, HE ALSO CONSTANTLY HEARS UNHELPFUL ADVICE FROM OTHER SUCH AS IRAQIS AND PALESTINIANS WHO DO NOT WANT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AND WHO WOULD LIKE TO SEE US EFFORTS FAIL. UNFORTUNATELY ZAYID PROBABLY

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SHARES WITH MANY OTHER ARABS WHO ARE DISTANT FROM FRONT-LINES INSUFFICIENT AWARENESS OF SUFFERING AND SACRIFICE THAT NOW LEAD CONFRONTATION STATES TO CONSIDER SETTLING FOR HALF A LOAF. NEVERTHELESS, WE BELIEVE HE HAS REALISTIC AWARENESS OF COSTS TO UAE THAT RENEWED ARAB-ISRAEL WARFARE WOULD BRING IN TERMS OF DISRUPTION TO UAE'S TIES WITH WEST AND EXTENSION OF RADICAL ARAB AND SOVIET INFLUENCE IN GULF. ZAYID THEREFORE SINCERELY HOPES FOR SUCCESS OF US EFFORTS AND WE BELIEVE HE WILL SUPPORT WHATEVER SETTLEMENT EGYPT

AND SYRIA ACCPET (ALBEIT WITH A WATCHFUL EYE OUT FOR HOW PALESTINIANS ARE TAKING IT).

5. ONE POLICY HAS BEEN AN ADDITIONAL AREA OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US AND UAE THIS PAST YEAR, HEIGHTENED BY FACT THAT MOST EUROPEANS HAVE BEEN UNWILLING TO DO ANYHARD LOBBYING FOR LOWERING OF OIL PRICES. THIS HAS PLACED OUR OWN EFFORTS IN SHARP FOCUS, AND AT TIMES, SUCH AS

AFTER PRESIDENTFORD'S DETROIT SPEECH AND SECRETARY'S SPEECH AT UNGA, EMOTIONS AGAINST THE US HAVE RUN FAIRLY HIGH ON THIS SCORE. HOWEVER, ON THIS ISSUE (IN CONTRAST TO ARAB-ISRAEL PROBLEM) THERE IS MUCH DIVIDED OPINION WITHIN UAEG AND AT ALL TIMES A CONVICTION THAT WITH GOOD WILL SOME KIND OF SOLUTION CAN BE REACHED THAT SATISFIES BOTH CONSUMER AND PRODUCER INTERESTS. MESSAGE USG HAS BEEN TRYING TO GET ACROSS, TOGETHER WITH WHAT UAE OFFICIALS CAN SEE WITH THEIR OWN EYES ABOUT DETERIORATING WORLD ECONOMY, HAS HAD EFFECT HERE. WE HAVE NOTICED

MORE CAUTIOUS AND CONCERNED ATTITUDE ON PART OF UAE OFFICIALS RECENTLY. THEY ARE NOT ONLY CONCERNED ABOUT DIFFICULTIES THEY FACE IN SELLING THEIR OWN OIL BUT INCREASINGLY REALIZE THEIR DECISIONS CANNOT BE TAKEN IN ISOLATION OF WORLD ECONOMIC CONDITIONS. THEY WOULD NOW FAVOR A SMALL PRICE DECREASE, THOUGH THEY ARE UNWILLING TO TAKE A LEAD FOR THIS IN OPEC COUNCILS AND WOULD NOT WISH IT TO OCCUR AT PRICE OF BREACH IN OPEC SOLIDARITY.

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6. UNDER GENERALLY BENIGN DIRECTION THAT ARAB-ISRAEL AFFAIRS TOOK IN 1974, AND IN SPITE OF DIFFERENCES OVER OIL POLICY, OVERALL ATMOSPHERE HERE FOR UNITED STATES HAS BEEN GOOD THIS PAST YEAR. AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN UAE HAS STEADILY GROWN TO ITS PRESENT ESTIMATED 1500-2000. US BUSINESSMEN ARRIVE BY THE DROVE AND ARE AS WELCOME AS ANY FOREIGN BUSINESS INTERESTS HERE. US FIRMS HAVE RECENTLY BEEN AWARDED SOME MAJOR CONTRACTS, SUCH AS CONSULTANCIES FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A TANKER FLEET AND OIL RESERVOIR STUDIES, ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

FOR MAJOR PUBLIC BUILDINGS, ENGINEERING FOR NEW AIRPORT AND FOR HOUSING PROJECTS. ALTHOUGH FINDING OUR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EXPENSIVE COMPARED TO WHAT IT CAN GET FROM EUROPE, UAEG HAS CALLED UPON US FOR RESIDENT CUSTOMS EXPERT AND FOR BUREAU OF RECLAMATION STUDY ON WATER CONSERVATION. INCREASING NUMBER OF EMIRATES STUDENTS ARE BEING SENT TO US FOR STUDY. USG ALSO GOT GOOD DEAL OF MILEAGE FROM ESTABLISHMENT OF RESIDENT US AMBASSADOR HERE LAST YEAR, STEP WAS MUCH DEISRED BY ZAYID AS PART OF THE CAMPAIGN TO DEMONSTRATE UAE WAS GOING CONCERN. OUR ACCESS TO TOP UAE OFFICIALS HAS BEEN CONFIDENTIAL

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EXCELLENT (WHEN THEY ARE IN COUNTRY) AND WE HAVE GENERALLY FELT THEY HAVE BEEN WILLING TO GIVE OUR VIEWPOINTS A FAIR HEARING.

7. OPERATIONAL PROBLEM WE ALONG WITH MANY OTHER EMBASSIES HERE FACE IN DEALING WITH UAEG IS DIFFICULTY IN GETTING IT TO FOLLOW

THROUGH ON PROJECTS TO THEIR COMPLETION. DECISION-MAKING IS CONCENTRATED IN HANDFUL OF OFFICIALS WHO FEEL OVERWORKED (BY THEIR STANDARDS) THAT THEY FLEE COUNTRY AT ANY OPPORTUNITY TO GET AWAY FROM IT ALL. IN MEANTIME UAEG HAS BEEN DELUGED WITH PROPOSALS OF ONE KIND OR ANOTHER AND HAS DEVELOPED ALMOST NEUROTIC UNWILLINGNESS TO COME TO DECISION ON THEM. NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN WHICH WE HAVE AN INTEREST (FMS AGREEMENT, ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTER, AGREEMENT FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA PROPOSAL FOR AGRICULTURE PROJECT IN AL-AIN) HAVE BEEN HUNG UP FOR SOME TIME. HOWEVER ALMOST EVERYBODY IS IN SAME BOAT AND THIS IS SIMPLY ONE OF CONDITIONS OF TRYING TO GET ANYTHING ACCOMPLISHED IN UAE. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE, BUT TOO EARLY TO SAY FOR CERTAIN, THAT MORE UNCERTAIN OUTLOOK ON ARAB-ISRAEL NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BEGUN TO PRODUCE MORE CAUTIOUS, WAIT-AND-SEE ATTITUDE ABOUT PROJECTS WHICH WOULD EXPAND US ROLE HERE.

8. MAJOR VARIABLE FOR US UAEG RELATIONS, AS IT IS TO ONE DEGREE OR

ANOTHER WITH ALL ARAB STATES, IS OUTCOME OF ARAB-ISRAEL NEGOTIATIONS.
IF SUCCESSIVE STAGES OF AGREEMENT ARE REACHED, WE CAN EXPECT
US INTERESTS HERE TO PROSPER, ALTHOUGH WE WOULD EXPECT THAT
EVEN IN THESE FORTUNATE CIRCUMSTANCES UAEG WILL BE CAREFUL TO
BALANCE US INFLUENCE HERE WITH THAT OF OTHER FRIENDLY INDUSTRIAL
POWERS--FRANCE, BRITIAN, EVENTUALLY PERHAPS JAPAN AND OTHER
EUROPEANS. IF, ON OTHER HAND, EVENTS TURN TOWARD WAR, OUR
INTERESTS WILL COME UNDER INCREASING PRESSURE. WE WOULD LIKE
TO THINK THAT EXPERIENCE UAEG HAS GAINED THIS PAST YEAR AS A WITNESS
TO ARAB-ISRAEL NEGOTIATIONS, AS WELL AS ITS SENSE OF GREATER
SECURITY AS FEDERATION ESTABLISHES ITSELF WOULD CAUSE ZAYID AND
HIS ADVISORS TO TAKE MORE CONSIDERED APPROACH TO RELATIONSHIP WITH
US IN NEXT CRISIS, THAN WAS CASE IN 1973. THIS MIGHT BE CASE IF
SYRIANS WERE TO JUMP GUN TO PROVOKE NEW HOSTILITIES AND OPINION
WAS DIVIDED IN ARAB COUNCILS AS TO ADVISABILITY OF THEIR ACTION.
BUT IN GE ARABIA--DECIDE TO TAKE
AGAINST THE US.
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